論　著

Meng Mu Meets the Modern: Female Exemplars in Early-Twentieth-Century Textbooks for Girls and Women

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Abstract

From the first through the early-twentieth centuries, Chinese female instruction books were more than simply a means of transmitting specific kinds of knowledge to girls and women. They also imparted a vision of the social world, serving as a matrix of both timeless ethical norms and shifting cultural priorities. Despite changes in the form and content of these texts over the centuries, their function was fundamentally the same. It was not to promote high intellectual learning (*xue* 學) among women, or to cultivate feminine aesthetic talent (*cai* 才), but to inculcate practical principles of ethical womanly conduct (*jiao* 教). In the early twentieth century as China's encounter with Western nations provoked a reevaluation of its long-standing cultural assumptions, the textual tradition devoted to promoting this feminine *jiao* was questioned, supplemented, and, to a certain degree, upheld.

This article examines the tradition of female didactic texts, focusing in

particular on the use of feminine exemplars in early-twentieth-century textbooks for girls and women. Both historical Chinese women celebrated in didactic texts from the first century and Western heroines from the more recent past were featured in these texts. The ways these exemplars functioned in the late-Qing materials challenges any simplistic formulation of a tradition/modernity divide. The use of historical exemplars in the new-style textbooks can be most productively analyzed in terms of the sedimentation of meaning over time with the early-twentieth-century texts representing one stage in the continued reappropriation and reconfiguration of female biographical narratives through the centuries. At the same time, the inclusion of foreign feminine models in the late Qing textbooks cannot simply be understood as a radical rupture with the past. The insertion of these modern Western lives into the ancient but constantly evolving repertoire of exemplary Chinese women both marked the possibility of transformation from within existing cultural traditions and demonstrated how the heralded "new" often remained structured by age-old precepts.

Key Words: textbooks, exemplary women, modern western exemplars

孟母遇見現代：二十世紀初女子教科書中的女性典範

季家珍

摘要

自一世紀至二十世紀早期，中國女訓書籍不僅是向女子傳播專門知識的工具，這類書籍表述著社會觀念，孕育了恒逾古今的道德規範和衍易變化的文化重點。儘管這些教本的形式與內容歷經了幾多世紀的變遷，其功用基本未變。女訓教本不以促進女子學識爲目的，不以培養女子才能爲任務，而是爲了向女子灌輸實用的行爲倫理規範。在二十世紀早期，當中西接觸激發中國人對其歷史久遠的文化自負重新評估的時候，人們對傳統女訓文本提出質疑，進行補充，並在一定程度內奉行遵守。

本文以二十世紀初女子教科書中的女性典範爲中心，探討女訓文本的傳統。這些女性典範既包括從一世紀以來女訓文本中的歷史人物，亦包括近代西方婦女。這些榜樣人物在晚清資料中的作用打破了簡單的傳統對現代的二分模式。新式教本對歷史人物的採用可視爲一種文化的歷史沉積。在此沉積中，二十世紀早期的教本代表了千百年來女傳敘述的再調整與重構建過程中的一個階段。同時，並不能簡單地將晚清教本對西方女性典範的採用理解爲與過去傳統的決裂。這類教本將西方現代人物與古時中國傳

統女性典範相穿插，標誌著現有文化傳統的內在轉變的可能，表明了新概念如何常常以古訓來建構。

關鍵詞：教科書，典範女性，近代西方女性典範

Meng Mu Meets the Modern: Female Exemplars in Early-Twentieth-Century Textbooks for Girls and Women

Joan Judge*

From the first through the early-twentieth centuries, Chinese female instruction books were more than simply a means of transmitting specific kinds of knowledge to girls and women. They also imparted a vision of the social world, serving as a matrix of both timeless ethical norms and shifting cultural priorities. Despite changes in the form and content of these texts over the centuries, their function was fundamentally the same. It was not to promote high intellectual learning (*xue* 學) among women, or to cultivate feminine aesthetic talent (*cai* 才), but to inculcate practical principles of ethical womanly conduct (*jiao* 教).[1] In the early twentieth century as China's

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[1] For a discussion of the difference between *jiao* and *xue* with relation to women's learing in the eighteenth-century see Susan Mann, "The Education of Daughters in the Mid-Ch'ing Period," in Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, eds., *Education and Society in*

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encounter with Western nations provoked a reevaluation of its long-standing cultural assumptions, the textual tradition devoted to promoting this feminine *jiao* was questioned, supplemented, and, to a certain degree, upheld.

I will examine this textual tradition, focusing in particular on the use of female exemplars in late-Qing textbooks for girls and women.[2] Both historical Chinese women celebrated in female didactic texts from the first century and Western heroines from the more recent past were featured in these texts. The ways these exemplars functioned in the late-Qing materials challenges any simplistic formulation of a tradition/modernity divide. The use of historical exemplars in the new-style textbooks can be most productively analyzed in terms of the sedimentation of meaning over time with the early-twentieth-century texts representing one stage in the continued reappropriation and reconfiguration of female biographical narratives through the centuries. At the same time, the inclusion of foreign feminine models in the late Qing textbooks cannot simply be understood as a radical rupture with the past. The insertion of these modern Western lives into the ancient but constantly evolving repertoire of exemplary Chinese women both marked the possibility of transformation from within existing cultural traditions and demonstrated how the heralded "new" often remained structured by age-old precepts.

Late Imperial China 1600-1900 (Los Angeles and Berkeley: University of California Press, 1994), p. 20; Susan Mann, *Precious Records: Women in Chinas Long Eighteenth Century,* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 54. On the differences between conceptions of *jiao, xue,* and *wen* in Chinese understandings of education in late imperial China, see Benjamin A. Elman and Alexander Woodside, "Introduction," in Elman and Woodside eds., *Education and Society in Late Imperial China 1600-1900*, pp. 3-5.

2 One of the textbooks I examine dates from 1914. Because this text reflects the same principles and concerns as the other, slightly earlier ones, and in order to avoid cumbersome language, I will frequently use the term "late Qing" to describe these texts as a group.

The use of old and new exemplars in the late-Qing textbooks reveals much more than a confusion of political tempos and a cultural hybridity, however. Invoking both an idealized Chinese past and an often romanticized foreign present, these texts provoked a radical questioning of existing gender arrangements and social meanings. In so doing they represented a moment of possibility for women that was perhaps more profound than either the Ming-Qing period which preceded it or the May Fourth era which followed.

Prescriptions For Late-Qing Textbooks

Conservative educators, reformers, and radical visionaries involved in the publication of new-style female textbooks in the late Qing all addressed the relevance of earlier instruction books to the education of Chinese females in the twentieth century. While government officials exclusively emphasized the inclusion of traditional Chinese women as exemplars in their prescriptions for late-Qing female textbooks, reformers almost uniformly included a combination of historical Chinese and modern foreign heroines in their privately produced texts.

The high government officials Rong-qing 榮慶 (1854-1912), Zhang Baixi 張百熙 (1847-1907), and Zhang Zhidong 張之洞 (1837-1909) drafted the first government document on female education in 1904. These high officials were opposed to the idea of formal female education and deeply concerned with the pernicious effect Western ideas could have on China's young women. They, therefore, advocated the publication of a specific kind of textbook that would uphold the ancient teachings on how to be loyal daughters, good wives, and wise mothers. To be used in the home or in institutes for training nursemaids, this text would help to mitigate the influence of new

foreign trends in female education by continuing to use traditional exemplars as models for young Chinese women in the early-twentieth-century.[3]

The two-volume illustrated text which these high officials proposed would be a compilation of selections from earlier instructional texts for women. These included the two foundational texts in the tradition of female didactic literature, the *Nü jie* 女誡 (Instructions for women) by Ban Zhao 班昭 (Cao Dajia 曹大家 c.48-c.120) and the *Lienü zhuan* 列女傳 (Biographies of exemplary women) by Liu Xiang 劉向 (79-8 BCE). These texts had had a profound impact on representations of women from the first through the early-twentieth centuries, establishing a legacy that Rong-qing, Zhang, and Zhang were committed to upholding. The *Nü jie* had first articulated the fundamental principles of Chinese womenly conduct and Ban Zhao had herself become a renowned exemplar in post-Han dynasty texts. The *Lienü zhuan* which had been the subject of numerous reeditions over the centuries, provided the template for female biographies in dynastic histories and instruction texts for women through the late Qing.[4] In addition to these two Han texts, the proposed textbook would include the *Nü xun* 女訓 (Women's instructions) by Cai Yong 蔡邕 of the Han, and the *Jiaonü yigui* 教女遺規 (Bequeathed guidelines for the education of women, 1742) compiled by Chen Hongmou 陳宏謀 (Rongmen, 1697-1771), together with selections from the mainstream male literate tradition, including the *Xiaojing* 孝經 (Classic of filial piety),

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3 Rong-qing 榮慶, Zhang Baixi 張百熙, Zhang Zhidong 張之洞, "Zouding mengyang yuan zhangcheng jiating jiaoyu fa zhangcheng 奏定蒙養院章程及家庭教育法章程, [Memorial on regulations for early training schools and for education on household matters]," January 13, 1904, reprinted in Chen Yuanhui 陳元暉 ed., *Zhongguo jindai jiaoyushi ziliao huibian* 中國近代教育史資料匯編 (Compendium of sources on the history of Chinese modern education), [Shanghai jiaoyu chubanshe, 1990], *Xuezhiyanbian* 學制演變, pp. 393-96.

4 Susan Mann, *Precious Records*, p. 205.

and Zhu Xi's 朱熹 (1130-1200) *Sishu* 四書 (Four books).[5] Rong-qing, Zhang, and Zhang further stipulated that simple foreign texts compatible with the Chinese way of womanhood could also be included in the textbook.[6]

In 1906, Liu Xun 劉撏, Manager of Affairs of the Ministry of Public Works, seconded Rong-qing, Zhang, and Zhang's recommendation for the compilation of female textbooks. Liu argued that because the purpose of textbooks for girls and women was to provide practical guidance on wifely duties and women's work, the sections on ethics should include tales of women famous for their beauty, virtue, and chaste behavior. These superior women of the past would serve as moral exemplars for young Chinese women in the present.[7]

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5 Chen Hongmou's compilation included the *Nü jie*, the *Nü xun* 女訓 [Women's instructions] by Cai Yong 蔡邕 of the Han; the *Nü lunyu*; the *Nüxiao'er yu* 女小兒語 [Rhymes for girls, between 1522 and 1567]; the *Guifan* 閨範 [Exemplars in the inner quarters, 1590] compiled by Lü Kun 呂坤; the *Jiaxun yuxia pian* 家訓御下篇 [Family instructions] by Wang Mengji 王孟箕, *Wenshi muxun* 溫氏母訓 [Recorded teachings of the mother of Mr. Wen Huang 溫璜]; *Yuanti ji* 願體集 [Writings on nourishing the body] by Shi Jinchen 史搢臣, *Rensheng bidushu* 人生必讀書 [Required reading for life] by Tang Yixiu 唐翼修; *Yanxing huizuan* 言行彙纂 [Compilation of words and deeds] by Wang Chaochuan 王朝川; and the unattributed *Nüxun yueyan* 女訓約言 [Brief words as instructions for women]. Chen's text was reprinted in whole or in extract as many as twenty times during the Qing and the Republican (1912-49) periods. On the *Jiaonü yigui*, see Lei Liangpo 雷良波, Chen Yangfeng 陳陽風, and Xiong Xianjun 熊賢軍, *Zhongguo nüzi jiaoyu shi* 中國女子教育史 [History of Chinese women's education], (Wuhan chubanshe., 1993), pp. 184-86; Susan Mann, "The Education of Daughters," pp. 21-22; Tianchi Martin-Liao, "Traditional Handbooks of Women's Education," in Anna Gerstlachere, Ruth Keen, Wolfgang Kubin, Margit Miosga, and Jenny Schon eds., *Women and Literature in China* (Bochum: Brockmeyer, 1985), pp. 180-81. On Chen Hongmou see William T. Rowe, "Women and the Family in Mid-Qing Social Thought: The Case of Chen Hongmou," *Late Imperial China* 13: 2 (December 1992), pp. 1-41.

6 Rong Qing, Zhang Baixi, Zhang Zhidong, pp. 393-96.

7 "Gongbu zhushi Liu Xian xuewu yaoduan zhe" 工部主事劉撏學務要端摺 [Manager of

The following year, the Qing government reluctantly published regulations sanctioning formal education for females for the first time in Chinese history.[8] These regulations which called for the establishment of elementary and normal women's schools, included a detailed discussion of the prospective textbooks to be used in these schools. The regulations advocated that selections from four of the texts already mentioned in Rong-qing, Zhang, and Zhang's 1904 memorial--the *Lienü zhuan,* the *Nü jie,* the *Nüxun*, and the *Jiaonü yigui*--be included in the official compilation, together with selections from a number of texts published from the Song to the Qing dynasties.[9]

Affairs of the Ministry of Public Works, Liu Xian, on important educational matters], *Nanyang guanbao* 南洋官報 Nanyang official gazette: 54, 1906, reprinted in *Zhongguo jindai xuezhi shiliao* 中國近代學制史料 [Historical materials on the modern Chinese educational system, (hereafter *XZSL*)] (Shanghai: Huadong shifan daxue chubanshe, 1989) 2: 2, p. 588.

8 "Xuebu zouding nüzi shifan xuetang zhangcheng zhe" 學部奏定女子師範學堂章程摺 [The Ministry of Education's memorial on the enactment of regulations for women's normal schools], *Da Qing Guangxu xinfaling, dishisance,* 大清光緒新法令，13 [New laws under Emperor Guangxu of the Great Qing Dynasty], Vol. 13, 3: 8, pp. 35-40, March 8, 1907, reprinted in *XZSL* 2: 2, p. 668. In sanctioning formal female education, the government was responding, in part, to the establishment of private schools for girls and women in the late-nineteenth and first years of the twentieth centuries. On these schools see Liao Xiuzhen 廖秀真, "Qingmo nüxue zai xuezhi shang de yanjin ji nüzi xiaoxue jiaoyu de fazhan, 1897-1911" 清末女學在學制上的演進及女子小學教育的發展 (1897-1911) [Late Qing women's education in the context of the evolution of the educational system and the development of women's elementary education, 1897-1911], in Li Yu-ning 李又寧, ed., *Zhongguo funüshi lunwenji* 中國婦女史論文集 [Historical essays on Chinese women's history] (Taipei: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1992), Vol. 2, pp. 203-55.

9 The additional texts included in the 1907 regulations were the Jiafan 家範 [Family model] by Sima Guang 司馬光 of the Song; two texts from the Ming compilation of the *Nü sishu*, the *Nü xiaojing* and the *Neixun*; and two texts included in Chen Hongmou's *Jiaonü yigui* (in addition to the already-mentioned *Neixun*), the *Guifan* and the *Wenshi muxun*. Finally, three other Qing texts were included in the government's proposal, the *Nüjiao jingzhuan tongzuan* 女教經傳通纂 [Compilation of classics and histories for the instruction of girls

Authors and editors of new-style textbooks for girls and women which were published from 1904, largely ignored these government proposals for texbooks based exclusively on earlier, and in their view, outmoded, instruction books. The introduction to a reader for girls and women published in 1904 stated that traditional didactic texts for women such as the *Nü jie* and the *Lienü zhuan,* were "extremely conservative, and cherished obsolete ideals." Because they could "only speak to women of ancient things" they had become irrelevant.[10] Rather than base their textbooks on these "obsolete" materials, late-Qing textbook editors attempted to create a distinct new genre of instructional materials which would mark both a textual and a cultural rupture with established traditions of women's learning.[11] One of the defining characteristics of these late-Qing texts was, in fact, a high degree of self-consciousness of both newness and genre. This is reflected in the titles of these works which frequently included the characters for "new" or "newest," and the term *jiaokeshu* 教科書 (textbook), an expression which, to my knowledge, does not come into use until the early twentieth century.[12] Another marker of

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and women] by Ren Qiyun 任啟運 (1670-1744), Lan Dingyuan's *Nüxue*, and the *Fuxue* 婦學 [Women's Education] by Zhang Xuecheng. "Xuebu zouding," 1907, p. 669.

10 Yang Qianli 楊千里, ed., *Nüzi xin duben* 女子新讀本 [New reader for girls and women] (Shanghai, Wenming shuju, 1905), "Daoyan," p. 3.

11 On the production of new-style textbooks in the late Qing see, Xiong Yuezhi 熊月之, *Xixue dongjian yu wan Qing shehui* 西學東漸與晚清社會 [The dissemination of Western learning and late Qing society] (Shanghai: Shanghai renmin chubanshe), 1994, p. 664; Lufei Bohong 陸費伯鴻, "Lun Zhongguo jiaokeshu shishu" 論中國教科書史書 [History of Chinese textbooks], in Zhang Jinglu 張靜廬ed., *Zhongguo jindai chuban shiliao* 中國近代出版史料 [Historical sources of modern Chinese publishing] (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1957), Vol. 1, pp. 219-220.

12 In defining the term *jiaokeshu*, the *Hanyu da cidian* 漢語大詞典 gives an example taken from the woman writer Bing Xin's 冰心 story "Jimo" 寂寞 which was written in the 1920s or 1930s.

the newness of these texts was their inclusion of foreign female exemplars.

In order to assess how radical the break between the "new" and "old" texts for women was, however, it is necessary to go beyond the pronouncements of textbook promoters or prefaces and read the new-style textbooks against the grain of the earlier materials. Rather than cite the mere inclusion of foreign female exemplars as evidence of an important rupture, it is crucial to analyze how these Western life-stories functioned in the new-style textbooks and discern to what degree they were subject to the same normative principles which structured Chinese women's biographies. At the same time, rather than take the use of the most-heralded traditional female exemplars in the early-twentieth-century textbooks as evidence of unambiguous continuities with the earlier instruction books, it is necessary to examine how the meaning of these traditional life-stories changed as they were integrated into a new textual genre, a different historical context, and, most significantly, a universal female community which included French anarchists and American abolitionists.

The Late-Qing Texts in Historical Context

Form

Despite their self-consciousness of belonging to a new genre of instructional materials, the late Qing texts shared certain fundamental characteristics with the loosely defined genre of earlier female instructional literature. These shared characteristics were formal and conceptual, relating to both the texts' structuring principles and their fundamental objectives.

The earlier didactic books for women were organized in one of three ways: by ethical principle, by exemplary figure, or by stages in the female life cycle. Ban Zhao's *Nü jie* was the prototype of the female instruction text organized by

ethical principle. In writing this moral guidebook for Chinese women, Ban, who was exceptionally well-trained in classical learning, drew extensively on ancient ritual texts. She integrated principles put forward in the "Neize" 內則 (Domestic regulations) section of the *Liji* 禮記 (Record of rites) into her gender ideology, and used the four womanly attributes (*side* 四德) first put forward in the *Zhouli* 周禮 (Rites of Zhou) to define feminine qualities.[13] Ban's text was divided into seven chapters, each of which expounded on a particular ethical principle: Beiruo 卑弱 (Humility); Fufu 夫婦 (Husband and wife); Jingshen 敬慎 (Respect and compliance); Fuxing 婦行 (Womanly behavior); Zhuanxin 專心 (Whole-hearted devotion); Qucong 曲從 (Implicit obedience); and He shumei 和叔妹 (Harmony with younger in-laws). An important number of later didactic texts for females followed this method of organization by ethical principle. They included the texts which, together with the *Nü jie* constituted the Ming and Qing compilations of the *Nü sishu* 女四書 (Four books for women)--the Tang texts the *Nü xiaojing* 女孝經 (Women's classic of filial piety) and the *Nü lunyu* 女論語 (Female analects), the *Neixun* 內訓 (Inner instruction) by Empress Renxiaowen 仁孝文 of the Ming (Empress Xu), and the *Nüfan jielu* 女範捷錄 (Concise selection of model women) which replaced the *Nü xiaojing* in the Qing compilation.[14]

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13 See Nancy Lee Swann, *Pan Chao: Foremost Woman Scholar of China, First Century A.D.* (New York: Russell and Russell, 1968), p. 86. The four womanly attributes were virtue (*de* 德) speech (*yan* 言), demeanor (*rong* 容), and meritorious deeds (*gong* 工). For the *Zhou li* connection, see, for example, Susan Mann, "Learned Women in the Eighteenth Century," in Christina K. Gilmartin, Gail Hershatter, Lisa Rofel, and Tyrene White, eds., *Engendering China: Women, Culture, and the State* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1994), p. 30.

14 In the Ming Dynasty, the *Nü lunyu*, together with the *Nü jie*, the *Nü xiaojing* and the *Neixun* were gathered together in a compilation entitled the *Nü sishu*. This compilation was modelled on Zhu Xi's 朱熹 (1130-1200) *Sishu* 四書 [Four books]. During the Kangxi period of the Qing dynasty, Wang Xiang 王相 (1789-1852) slightly altered the

It is believed that Ban Zhao also played a role as annotator or editor of the archetypal text organized by exemplary figure, Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan*.[15] The conception of Liu's text was derived from the notion of biography found in Sima Qian's 司馬遷 (?135-?93 BCE) *Shiji* 史記 (Records of the grand historian).[16] While the *Lienü zhuan* was a collection of exemplary biographies, it was, nonetheless, structured by ethical principles: six of its seven main sections were defined by a particular ethical principle (and the seventh by a lack thereof). Each section was then sub-divided into approximately fifteen chapters which documented the lives of individual women who exemplified the particular virtue celebrated in the section. The section headings included Muyi 母儀 (Maternal rectitude); Xianming 賢明 (Sage intelligence); Ren zhi 仁智

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composition of the *Four Books for Women* by substituting an instructional text written by his mother entitled the *Nüfan jielu* for the *Nü xiaojing*. This grouping has come down to us as the *Nü sishu* in most editions. On the *Neixun* and the *Nüfan jielu*, see Yamazaki Jun'ichi 山崎純一, *Kyôiku kara mita Chûgoku joseishi shiryôno kenkyû: 'Onna shisho' to 'Shin fufu' Sanbu sho* 教育からみた中國女性史資料の研究 —『女四書』と『新婦譜』三部書 [A documentary study of Chinese women's history as seen from the perspective of education: the *Four Books for Women* and three editions of the *Standard guide for the new wife*] (Tokyo: Meiji Shoin, 1966), pp. 153-232, 234-36. On the *Nü xiaojing* see Yamazaki, 1966, pp. 337-384; Lei, Chen, and Xiong, pp. 92-4; Tianchi Martin-Liao, pp. 172-73; Lisa Raphals, *Sharing the Light: Representations of Women and Virtue in Early China* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1998), pp. 252-54; Julia K. Murray, "Didactic Art for Women: The *Ladies' Classic of Filial Piety*," in Marsha Weidner ed., *Flowering in the Shadows: Women in the History of Chinese and Japanese Painting* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press,1990), pp. 29-32; on the *Nü lunyu* see Yamazaki, pp. 107-152; Lei Chen, and Xiong, pp. 94-102; Martin-Liao, pp. 174-75; Patricia Buckley Ebrey, *The Inner Quarters: Marriage and the Lives of Chinese Women in the Sung Period* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press,1993), p. 24.

15 Raphals, p. 109. The earliest extant text of the *Lienü zhuan* is from the Song dynasty with a preface dated 1036. However, this edition was first printed in the Yuan and later reprinted in the Ming and Qing.

16 On the *Lienü zhuan* see Raphals; Lei, Chen, and Xiong, pp. 33-37.

(Benevolent wisdom); Zhen shun 貞順 (Purity and obedience); Jie yi 節義 (Chastity and righteousness); and Bian tong 辯通 (Skill in argument).

The third mode of organization in the earlier didactic texts was by stages in the female life cycle. These texts outlined the exemplary virtues of *nü* 女 (daughters and young women), *fu* 婦 (wives), and *mu* 母 (mothers). This structuring principle was a later development which first appeared in *Lü* Kun's 呂坤 Ming text the *Guifan* 閨範 (Exemplars in the inner quarters, 1590) and in Qing texts such as Lan Dingyuan's 藍鼎元 (1680-1733) influential *Nüxue* 女學 (Teachings for girls, preface dated 1712 to 1713). Lan's text drew extensively on both the *Nü jie* and the *Lienü zhuan*. It included a series of chapters illustrating the four womanly attributes featured in Ban's text, together with exemplary biographies in the style of Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan*.[17] This newer form of organization shifted the emphasis, however, from particular virtues and individuals to the female's appropriate life-cycle roles.[18]

The nine late-Qing textbooks examined in this paper--four ethics textbooks, three readers, one letter-writing manual, and one songbook--generally followed one of these three modes of organization or a combination of them. The exceptions are the 1905 *Nüzi guowen duben* 女子國文讀本 (Female Chinese reader), a relatively advanced text written for older, slightly literate women which simply numbered its lessons from one to 110 without grouping them thematically;[19] the letter-writing manual the *Nüzi fenlei chidu fanben* 女子分類

[17] Lan's text imitated the style of Zhu Xi's *Xiaoxue* 小學 [Lesser learning, 1187] an anthology of passages from the classics, histories, the philosophers, and literary collections. Lan Dingyuan 藍鼎元 (c. 1712) *Nüxue* 女學 [Teachings for girls], reprint, (Taipei: Wenhai chuban she., 1977). On the *Nüxue*, see Lei, Chen, and Xiong, pp. 182-84.

[18] Raphals, pp. 117, 137.

[19] The *Nüzi guowen duben* was written by Liu Sheng 劉生 in 1905 and published by the Shangwu yinshuguan 商務印書館 (Commercial Press), the most prolific, innovative, and

尺牘範本 (Copybook of classified letters for women) which was divided according to kinds of letters;[20] and the song book the *Nüzi xin changge chuji* 女子新唱歌初集 (First collection of new songs for girls and women) which was organized by individual songs.[21] In the latter text, however, certain of the songs were organized according to the structuring principles outlined above.

Of the nine late-Qing textbooks under consideration, only the *Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 最新女子修身教科書 (Newest ethics textbook for girls and women), a general ethics textbook aimed at higher elementary and normal school students, was organized exclusively by ethical principles. The textbook's relationship to the the *Nü jie* was made explicit in one of its prefaces which explained that the text was based on selections from Ban's work, together with excerpts from Cai Yong's *Nüxun* and from "ethics books for

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influential producer of new teaching materials in the late Qing. Liu noted in the preface that the *Nüzi guowen duben* was based on selections from a text entitled *Guowen jiaoshou jinjie* 國文教受進階 (New level of instruction for Chinese teachers) by Wang Jianshan 王建善. Liu Sheng 劉生, *Nüzi guowen duben* 女子國文讀本 [Chinese reader for girls and women] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1905).

20 The *Nüzi fenlei chidu fanben* 女子分類尺牘範本 [Copybook of classified letters for women] was compiled by the Biaomeng bianyisuo 彪蒙編譯所 [Enlightenment bureau for compilation and translation] and published by the Biaomeng shushe 彪蒙書社 in Shanghai in 1908. The preface stated that the text's main objective was to impart ethical education, and that it could be used as both a letter writing guidebook and an ethics textbook. Biaomeng bianyisuo *Nüzi fenlei chidu fanben* (Shanghai: Biaomeng shushe, 1908).

21 The *Nüzi xin changge chuji* 女子新唱歌初集 [First collection of new songs for girls and women] was edited by Ye Zhongling 葉中泠 and collated by Jiang Weiqiao 蔣維喬, one of the leading textbook editors for the Shangwu yinshuguan which published the work in 1914. According to the introduction, the songbook could be used at all levels of female education since its content progressed from simple to more difficult, the easier songs being appropriate for students at the lower elementary level, and the more difficult for those at the middle school and upper-level normal school level. Ye Zhongling 葉中泠 ed., Jiang Weiqiao 蔣維喬 collator, *Nüzi xin changge chuji* 女子新唱歌初集 [First collection of new songs for girls] (Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1914).

women from all countries, east and west."[22] The majority of the chapter titles in the *Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* were similar to those found in Ban's and other earlier instruction books for women. More chapters (ten in all) were devoted to the principle of chastity (*jiecao* 節操) than to any other theme. Biographies of legendary or historical women often exemplified the specific moral lessons put forward in individual chapters.[23]

There is also one textbook organized exclusively by exemplary figure, the *Nüzi xin duben* 女子新讀本 (New reader for girls and women), a two-volume collection of tales of exemplary women aimed at the middle-school-level reader. This text followed the *Lienü zhuan* in celebrating the lives of individual women but it did not group the biographies according to ethical principles. It included eighteen chapters on historical Chinese figures and ten on more recent Western women.[24] Three of the songs in the songbook were also organized by individual biography. They were the "Zhongguo nüjie xiao yuefu" 中國女傑小樂府 (A small collection of songs concerning Chinese heroines), "Nü zhuzuo"女著作 (Women writers), and "Shijie shier nüjie" 世界十二女傑 (Twelve world heroines).

Two of the textbooks were hybrids of these first and second principles of organization, combining chapters on specific ethical principles with individual biographies. They include the widely-used ethics textbook, the *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 初等小學女子修身教科書 (Lower-level elementary female ethics textbook), an illustrated series of 60 short lessons

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22 Xu Jiaxing 許家惺, *Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 最新女子修身教科書 [Newest ethical textbook for girls and women] (Shanghai: Qunxue she, 1906), p. 1.

23 The *Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* was composed of over 120 short and relatively simple lessons to be studied over a period of two years.

24 The *Nüzi xin duben* was edited by Yang Qianli 楊千里 and first published in 1904 by Wenming shuju 文明書局 in Shanghai.

written in the vernacular and aimed at lower-level elementary school students. Chapter titles in this textbook were frequently similar to those found in earlier instruction books for women, such as "Mujia" 睦家 (Harmony within the family) and "Xiao wenggu" 孝翁姑 (Filiality towards in-laws), and it also featured biographies of exemplary women, a number of whom—Mencius's mother (Meng Mu 孟母) and Ti Ying 緹縈, for example--first appeared in the *Lienü zhuan*.[25] The second hybrid text was the *Zuixin funü guowen duben* 最新婦女國文讀本 (Newest Chinese reader for women), an eight volume text written for women over twenty years of age. This text included chapters on ethics and biographies, together with lessons on subjects such as geography or education. Twenty-one out of the reader's 200 chapters were devoted to ethics, while nineteen were biographies. These biographies were included under the heading "Stories" (*gushi* 故事). Half of the narratives on Western women were almost exact duplicates of those found in the *Nüzi xin duben*.[26]

Two of the textbooks were organized according to the female life cycle. The first was the *Nü xiaoxue* 女小學 (Lesser learning for girls and women). This text stands out among the nine textbooks in a number of ways: it was

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25 The *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* was written by Xie Chongxie 謝充燮 and published by the Zhongguo jiaoyu gailianghui 中國教育改良會 in Shanghai. It was distributed by a number of publishers: Wenming shuju, Kaiming shuju, Xinxue huishe, Shizhong shuju, Kexue huishe, and provincial government publishing houses. Xie Chongxie 謝充燮, *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 初等小學女子修身教科書 [Lower-level elementary female ethics textbook] (Shanghai: Zhongguo jiaoyu gailianghui, 1906).

26 The *Zuixin funü guowen duben* was compiled by Guang Zhanyun 廣展雲, Guang Yiyun 廣翼雲, and Chen Yuxin 陳與新 and published by the Jiaoyu pujishe 教育普及社 in Fuzhou in 1908. Its subject matter was divided into twelve subheadings on topics ranging from ethics to hygiene, and from physics to physiology. The sections with the largest number of entries included Education, Geography, History, Ethics, and Stories. Guang Zhanyun, Guang Yiyun, Chen Yuxin, comp., *Zuixin funü guowen duben* 最新婦女國文讀本 [Newest Chinese reader for women], 8 vols., (Fuzhou: Jiaoyu pujishe, 1908).

written by a woman, Dai Li 戴禮; it was highly conscious of its links to the classical tradition (the title makes reference to Zhu Xi's *Xiaoxue*); and it was the only one of the nine texts analyzed in this paper which was officially approved by the Xuebu 學部 (Ministry of Education). The *Nü xiaoxue* was divided into four sections: "Nüxue" 女學 (Female learning), "Nüxing" 女行 (Female behavior), "Fude" 婦德 (Women's virtue), and "Muyi" 母儀 (Maternal rectitude).[27] Dai Li favorably compared her text to others in the tradition of didactic books for women, asserting, for example, that it was superior to Ban Zhao's *Nüjie* which was too brief, and to Liu Xiang's *Lienü zhuan* which "lacked wisdom."[28] The second text organized according to the female life cycle was the *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* 女子師範修身學 (Ethics for female normal school students), a textbook aimed at a slightly higher level than the other ethics textbooks. This text followed Lü Kun's *Guifan* in opening with a general section followed by three sections devoted to each of the phases in a woman's life: "Nüfan" 女範 (Model females), "Fufan" 婦範 (Model wives), and "Mufan" 母範 (Model mothers). In addition to these two texts, one of the three songs in the songbook, the "Zhongguo nüjie xiao yuefu" was divided into

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27 The *Nü xiaoxue* was written in 1905 and published in 1908 by the Beijing hufangqiao jinghua yinshuju 北京虎坊橋京華印書局. Both Dai Li in her "Author's Preface" and the Hanlin scholar, Zhang Qin 章梫, in the book's general introduction emphasized that the *Nü xiaoxue* was modelled on Zhu Xi's work. Dai Li further explained that Lan Dingyuan's *Nüxue* (itself modelled on the *Xiaoxue*) was an inspiration for her text. The text was distributed by both the Xuebu tushuju shoushuchu 圖書局售書處 [Book Sales Division of the Ministry of Education] and by the Shangwu yinshuguan office in Beijing. It was approved for use as both a female normal school ethics textbook and as a reference text for general female ethics classes. Dai Li 戴禮，*Nü xiaoxue* 女小學 [Women's elementary education] (Beijing: Beijiing hufangqiao jinghua yinshuju, 1908), "Zixu," p. 1.

28 Dai Li also expressed her regret that more reliable texts--including the *Nüxian* 女憲 (Code for girls and women), and the *Nüze* 女則 [Regulations for girls and women]--were no longer extant. Dai Li, "Xu," 序 p. 2.

sections on "Nüyi" 女儀 (Female rectitude), "Fufan" 婦範 (Model wives) and "Muxing" 母型 (Maternal examplars).[29]

Ethos

The late-Qing textbooks not only shared principles of form with the earlier instruction books for women, but also a fundamental ethos. From the Han dynasty on the purpose of female instruction books had been to prepare young unmarried women for their future ritual and domestic roles as wives and mothers. The primary objective of these texts was to inculcate appropriate feminine behavior and clarify social and familial practices. It was not to promote female erudition or foster literary talent. These texts were thus focused on imparting *jiao* -- practical ethical education--rather than on cultivating *xue* (scholarly learning) or *cai* (aesthetic talent).

An examination of the feminine exemplars celebrated in the late Qing textbooks demonstrates the extent to which these "new-style" texts followed this long-standing emphasis on *jiao*. Forty-five Chinese female exemplars and fourteen foreign ones were mentioned in the nine textbooks (for lists of these Chinese and foreign women, see Figures 1 and 2). Out of these 44, only five were included for their specifically literary activities and three of these five were authors of didactic books for women. These three were Ban Zhao and the two ostensible authors of the Tang-era female instruction texts the *Nü lunyu* and the *Nü xiaojing*, Song Ruohua 宋若華, and Ms. Zheng 鄭, respectively. One of the other two women was Su Hui 蘇蕙 of the Jin Dynasty (265-420)

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[29] The *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* was edited by Wu Tao 吳濤 and published by Beijing diyi shuju in 1907. Reflecting its more sophisticated targetted audience, the lessons in this textbook were longer and more expository in nature than those in the other ethics textbooks. Wu Tao 吳濤 ed., *Nüzi shifan xiushenxue* 女子師範修身學 [Ethics for female normal students] (Beijing: Beijing diyi shuju, 1907).

FIGURE 1

EXEMPLARY CHINESE WOMEN APPEARING IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY TEXTBOOKS

	XDB	*GWDB*	*XS*	*ZXXS*	*SFXS*	*FN*	*NXX*	*CDFB*	*CG*
Mencius's mother 孟母	x		x	x	x	x			x
Ouyang Xiu's mo. 歐陽修母			x	x	x				x
Ti Ying 緹縈	x		x		x				x
Pang E 龐娥	x			x					
Jianü 賢女	x			x					
Li Ji 李寄	x								
Hua Mulan 花木蘭	x		x		x				x
Xun Guan 荀灌	x							x	
Liang Furen 梁夫人	x								
Yan Gongren 晏恭人	x								
Xi Furen 洗夫人	x								
Qin Liangyü 秦良玉	x								
Yang Xiang 楊香	x		x						
Tong Bano 童八娜	x								x
Ban Zhao 班昭	x		x		x			x	
Huang Chonggu 黃崇嘏	x								
Wei Furen 衛夫人	x								
Wu Zetian 武則天	x								
Zheng Yizong's wife 鄭義宗妻						x			
Yue Yangzi's w. 樂羊子妻				x	x	x		x	x
Li Kan's w. 李侃妻					x				
Cui Xuanwei's mo. 崔玄暐母					x	x			
Shen Yunying 沈雲英					x	x			
Cao E 曹娥					x				x
Rao E 饒娥					x				x
Nie Ying 聶嫈					x				
Liang Hong's w. 梁鴻妻(Mengguang 孟光)						x			
Tao Ying 陶嬰				x					
Lu Qi's daughter 魯漆女						x			
Gao Shushu 高妹妹									x
Dou Boniang 竇伯娘									x
Dou Zhongniang 竇仲孃									x
Huan Shaojun 桓少君									x
Liu Cuige 劉翠哥									x
Pang E 龐娥									x
Qing Fengling 青楓嶺									x
Cheng Mu 程母									x
Meng Ren's mo. 孟仁母									x
Tao Kan's mo. 陶侃母									x
Mang of Wei's mo. 魏芒慈母									x
Empress Chang sun 長孫皇后									x
Mme. Zheng 鄭氏									x
Song Ruohua 宋若華									x
Su Hui 蘇蕙								x	

FIGURE 2

EXEMPLARY FOREIGN WOMEN APPEARING IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY TEXTBOOKS

	XDB	*GWDB*	*XS*	*ZXXS*	*SFXS*	*FN*	*NXX*	*CDFB*	*CG*
Charlotte Corday 沙魯脫									
沙奴土格兒垤	x			x					x
Anita Garibaldi 馬尼他									
加蟹波兒地夫人	x								x
Louise Michel 路易美世	x								x
Joan [of Arc] 如安									
如安打克娘	x					x			x
Mme. Roland 羅蘭夫人									
朗蘭夫人	x								x
Lüzhi 縷志									
Fazhensun 縷志 發珍遜	x								x
Frances Willard									
扶蘭志斯	x				x	x			x
Louisa 流易設									
普國王后流易設 亞茗里孃	x				x	x			x
Harriet Beecher 批茶	x					x			
Flo. Nightengale 南丁格爾	x					x			
蘇泰流夫人								x	
Catherine the Great									
俄國女帝加陀摩									x
Queen Isabelle 伊妙百兒女王									x
Queen 克路崎美蘇								x	

who used her literary talents to better perform her wifely duties, embroidering an 840 character palindrome on her husband's handkerchief while he served as governor in a distant province. The last of the five literate women was Wei Furen 衛夫人 (272-349) of the Eastern Jin dynasty, a calligrapher, and the instructor of the famous male calligrapher Wang Xizhi 王羲之 (c. 303-61).[30]

Ban Zhao stood out in the late-Qing textbooks as the prototypical literate

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[30] Yang Qianli, "Daoyan," pp. 2, 3; Lesson 26.

female. Earlier female didactic texts had already granted her this preeminent stature. In the *Nü xiaojing*, the parallel female text to the *Xiaojing*, Ban was featured as Confucius's counterpart. Just as the *Xiaojing* was written in the form of a dialogue between Confucius and his disciple Zeng Zi 曾子, the *Nü xiaojing* presented Ban Zhao engaged in a dialogue with a group of female disciples.[31] Five of the nine late-Qing textbooks prominently featured Ban Zhao in one of five different roles or a combination of them: as the author of the *Nü jie*, as an author of the *Hanshu* 漢書 (Han history, which she completed when her elder brother, the historian, Ban Gu died), as a teacher, and as a filial wife and sister.[32] Even as these texts celebrated this the most renowned of learned Chinese women, however, they frequently elided the significance of her intellectual achievements. A number of the textbooks did not mention her contribution to the Han History, while others diminished it by emphasizing that Ban was merely following in her brother's footsteps.[33]

In other cases where a woman's literary talents were mentioned they were always presented either in tandem with or overshadowed by her military prowress. Xun Guan 荀灌 of the Jin was acclaimed for using both her literary and military talent to save her father and his people; Qin Liangyü 秦良玉 (d. ??1648, 1668) a Ming loyalist whose father gave her the same military and literary education as her brothers was featured for her role in fighting to protect her home town in Sichuan from devastation by local rebels; the French anarchist Louise Michel (1830-1905) was celebrated for having fought with

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[31] The *Nü xiaojing* differed from Ban's text, however, by following the *Xiaojing* in extending its sphere of concern beyond the domestic realm, which was Ban Zhao's focus, to society and the cosmos. Yamazaki, pp. 337-384; Lei, Chen, and Xiong, pp. 92-4; Tianchi Martin-Liao, pp. 172-73; Raphals, pp. 252-54; Murray, pp. 29-32.

[32] On Ban Zhao's life and all of her writings, see Swann.

[33] Xie Chongxie, Lesson 46; Yang Qianli, Lesson 24.

gun and sword, not for the book she wrote before she died; and Madame Roland was noted for her learning, but heralded for her political courage at the time of the French Revolution.[34]

The most interesting example of how a woman's literary achievements were underplayed, however, was the account of the life of Harriet Beecher Stowe (1811-96) which appeared in the *Nüzi xin duben* and was repeated almost verbatim in the *Zuixin funü guowen duben*. The relatively long account of Beecher Stowe's life emphasized her role as an abolitionist and mentioned that she graduated from school and entered university. It gave her no credit for her literary achievements, however, and claimed that although she wanted to write a book to save the slaves she lacked the necessary skills to do so. Instead, she implored her husband Calvin Ellis Stowe, a teacher, (who, in reality, had neither Beecher Stowe's energy nor her talent) to write the book on her behalf. The book attributed to Calvin Ellis Stowe was not *Uncle Tom's Cabin* but the *Mayflower*, a collection of stories written by Beecher Stowe in 1843. These distortions in the Beecher Stowe narrative cannot be explained by the textbook authors' lack of access to an accurate account of her writing career since Chen Xiefen 陳擷芬 had published such an account in a 1903 *Nüxue bao* 女學報 (Female learning) article.[35]

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34 Yang Qianli, Vol. 1, Lessons 11, 18, Vol. II. Lessons 5, 6, 10, 11.

35 Yang Qianli, Vol. II, Lessons 17, 18. On the life of Harriet Beecher Stowe, see Edward T. James, ed., *Notable American Women 1607-1950: A Biographical Dictionary* 3 Vols, (Cambridge, MA: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 392-402. On Chen Xiefen's article, see Charlotte L. Beahan, "Feminism and Nationalism in the Chinese Women's Press, 1902-1911," *Modern China* 1:4 (Ocotober 1975), p. 392. Marilyn Booth finds a similar erasure or underplaying of women's literary talents in biographies of foreign women written in Egyptian texts from around the same period. Jane Austen, for example, was first noted for her handiwork rather than her novels, "'May Her Likes Be Multiplied': 'Famous Women' Biography and Gendered Prescription in Egypt, 1892-1935," *Signs* 22: 4

In addition to almost exclusively celebrating literate women of the past who promoted *jiao*, the late Qing textbooks uniformly portrayed women with refined literary talents (*cai*) or scholarly learning (*xue*) as negative exemplars. The moralistic pronouncements condemning female talent were not new in tone or content in the early twentieth century. They made direct or indirect reference to the saying popularized in the late sixteenth century and fundamental to Ming-Qing female instruction books: "a man with virtue is a man of talent. A woman without talent is a woman of virtue" (*nanzi youde bian shi cai, nüzi wucai bian shi de* 男子有德便是才，女子無才便是德).[36] They also echoed Zhang Xuecheng's late eighteenth century criticism of frivolous female literary pursuits.[37]

The *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue*, for example, accused women who had "a reputation for talent and brilliance in composing verse (*yongxu* 詠絮), calligraphy," and other feminine literary arts of being "smug, complacent, and shameless." It was this shamelessness, the text declared, which had given rise to the saying that "only a woman without talent was virtuous."[38] The prefaces to the *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* and the *Nü xiaoxue* adopted the same moral tone in criticizing women poets of the past for indulging themselves in writing and reading *ci* 詞, a genre of romantic song lyric which had its origin in the pleasure quarters. In her preface to the *Nü xiaoxue* Dai Li condemned

(Summer 1997), p. 866.

[36] Kang-i Sun Chang, "Ming-Qing Women Poets and the Notions of 'Talent' and 'Morality,'" in Theodore Huters, R. Bin Wong, and Pauline Yu eds., *Culture and State in Chinese History: Conventions, Accomodations, Critiques* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997), p. 239.

[37] Susan Mann, "Fuxue [Women's Learning] by Zhang Xuecheng (1738-1801): China's First History of Women's Culture," *Late Imperial China* 13: 1 (June 1992), pp. 40-56.

[38] Wu Tao, pp. 5, 11.

these song lyrics which had been particularly popular among Qing women poets as "nothing but dissolute vanities." The *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* blamed the *cainü* adept at writing *ci* for debasing the literate tradition and provoking the conservative claim that only untalented women were virtuous.[39]

Although criticism of women of talent was not new in the late Qing, what was new in the textbooks of this period was the merging of this critique of *cai* with a critique of *xue*. The disdain for female practioners of literate culture expressed in the textbooks reflected a broader cultural trend as reformers in this period became increasingly skeptical of the Confucian tradition's ability to meet the challenges of the modern global era. This trend culminated in the emphasis on new, more practical fields of knowledge in the early-twentieth century and in the abolition of the civil service examination system in 1905. While traditional female didactic texts had always priveleged *jiao* over *xue*, this general questioning of the value of past traditions of learning enabled promoters of practical-oriented teachings for women to juxtapose the merits of women devoted to *jiao* to the faults of those adept at what was now considered to be obsolete classical learning.

According to the introduction to the *Nüzi xin duben*, women with refined literary talents were present in both the historical record and contemporary society. However, these women had been corrupted by "the poisonous influence of male Han and Song studies." They were neither ethical nor of good

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39 The form of the *ci* had arisen in the Tang in conjunction with the creation of the *Jiaofang si* 教坊司 (Palace Music School) where women performed by dancing and singing to entertain and titillate, thus becoming objects of male desire. Mann, "Fuxue," p. 47. Xie Chongxie, "Xuyan," 1, Lesson 51; Dai Li, Zixu, p. 2.

reputation and had thus incurred the wrath of society.[40] In a chapter on self-respect, the author of the *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* directly equated male *xue* with female *cai* in order to condemn both. The "slightly literate" *cainü's* 才女 (talented woman) practice of "commenting on the wind and the moon" was, he claimed, no better than "the poison" of the eight-legged essay (*baguwen* 八股文) and the poetry men were required to write in order to pass the civil service examinations.[41]

In the late Qing textbooks--as in earlier didactic texts for women--moral and practical, rather than scholarly or literary, instruction was thus considered to be the essence of female education. This was reflected in the exemplars chosen to represent these values. The first sample in the *Nüzi fenlei chidu fanben*, for example, was a letter that had supposedly been written by an elderly couple to their grandaughter. It explained that "when females study, it is only necessary that they gain a general understanding of the most important principles. They do not need to have a broad understanding of the classics and histories" (the terms "classics and histories" were glossed as "the Thirteen Classics and Twenty-four Histories" revealing the assumption that the text's female audience was culturally illiterate). The elderly couple held up two women of the Han dynasty noted for their filiality rather than for their literate abilities as exemplars. The first was Ti Ying who was celebrated in a chapter of the *Lienü zhuan* for petitioning the emperor to save her father from a cruel punishment, and the second was Cao E 曹娥 who had thrown herself into a river in order to search for her father's corpse. The couple urged their granddaughter to study the lives of these women and discouraged her from imitating learned women of the past. "We do not want you to become a Cao

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40 Yang Qianli, "Daoyan," pp. 2-3.

41 Wu Tao, p. 11.

Dajia (although the young woman was told later in the same letter not to neglect Cao's [Ban Zhao's] teachings) "or a Xie Daoyun 謝道韞," an Eastern Jin gentry woman poet.[42]

The new-style textbooks' emphasis on *jiao* as instruction in ethical precepts, practical matters, and general principles was evident not only in the selection of exemplars featured in these texts but in the way these exemplars were presented. The function of the female biographies was to inspire not to enlighten, to encourage a certain kind of behavior, rather than to educate about particular historical truths. This was underlined in the *Zuixin funü guowen duben* which presented its accounts of heroic women under the category of "Stories" rather than history. The same principle was clearly articulated in one of the introductions to the *Nüzi xin duben*. The introduction explained that while the text which followed was a collection of the tales of exemplary women, East and West, it was not a biographical work. Rather it was a reader and as such it would inform without exhausting the mental energy of its audience. Names in the text were simplified, complicated relations to family members were not mentioned, and general periods such as "several hundred years ago" were given instead of precise dates.[43]

Content

A fundamental ethos concerning the education of girls and women remained constant from the earlier instruction texts for women through the new-style late Qing textbooks. There were, however, important changes in the content of these texts as old material was transformed and new material introduced. This had been true over the centuries as the earlier female

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42 Biaomeng, p. 1.

43 Yang Qianli.

instruction books were reconfigured in accordance with shifting cultural priorities, social norms, and even economic and technological realities. The numerous Ming recensions of the *Lienü zhuan* provide one example of this textual reconfiguration. Often radically departing from the original Han text, these Ming editions reflected advances in woodcut printing technology, the growth of a new reading public, and shifts in cultural vocabulary.[44] An even more profound order of cultural and political transformation marked the content of textbooks for girls and women in the late-Qing period. The most significant source of this transformation was the intrusion of the foreign into the Chinese geo-political world and cultural-social imaginary in this period. The challenge posed by the Western powers to China's national and cultural integrity had an often dramatic impact on conceptions of the function and meaning of female literacy as reformers questioned traditional gender arrangements, debated the woman's role in the new nation, and looked to foreign women as models of new modes of feminine behavior.

This intrusion of the foreign is evident in all of the late-Qing textbooks, whether it was resisted or, as was more often the case, welcomed. Five of the textbooks celebrated exemplary foreign women alongside Chinese women, while two of the texts spoke in more general terms of Western women and Western social practices.

The textbooks which featured foreign women continued to follow the logic of the *Lienü zhuan* in arguing from what some women had ostensibly done to

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44 On these development in the Ming editions, see Raphals, pp. 110, 113-38. For a full discussion of the various Ming recensions in the context of female didactic literature in the Ming, see Wang Guangyi 王光宜, *Mingdai nü jiaoshu yanjiu* 明代女教書研究 [A study of Ming didactic literature for girls and women], Graduate Institute of History, National Taiwan Normal University, Masters thesis, 1999.

what all women could and should do if given the chance.[45] The introduction to the *Nüzi xin duben* which was solely composed of the accounts of "Women Worthies" East and West explained the reasons for structuring the text in this way. The Chinese historical exemplars included in the first volume of the text were to serve as "the past leaders of our new Chinese women citizens," while the foreign women who populated the second volume represented "their future image."[46] This reader included eighteen Chinese exemplars, mostly from the distant past, and ten foreign exemplars from more recent Western history. Other textbooks which featured foreign women had an even less favorable ratio of Western to Chinese exemplars but shared the *Nüzi xin duben's* strategy. The *Zuixin funü guowen duben* included five foreign women to fourteen Chinese, the songbook introduced one song featuring twelve foreign heroines versus another featuring 22 Chinese heroines. *The Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* and the *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* mentioned only one foreign woman each in contrast to six and twelve Chinese women respectively. Approximately one-third of the Chinese exemplars appear in more than one of the nine texts, whereas three-fifths of the Western women do, an indication of the more limited repertoire of foreign sources.

The result of this strategy of celebrating legendary and historical Chinese women together with exotic and "modern" Western heroines was, as the introduction to the *Nüzi xin duben* suggested, the creation of a singular category of women which stretched from the past into the future, from the Chinese hinterland to France and America, incorporating the dualities of East and West,

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[45] This strategy is not unique to China or the *Lienü zhuan* but has been used-- many would argue overused-- in the recent enterprise of women's history. Natalie Zemon Davis, "'Women's History' in Transition: The European Case," in Joan Wallach Scott, ed. *Feminism and History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 79.

[46] Yang Qianli, "Daoyan," p. 2.

the essential and the evolving.[47] This was an almost mythical category, with both sets of women distant enough, either historically in the Chinese case, or culturally, in the Western to be less than real. As in the *Lienü zhuan* and its later recensions, all of the women were paragons of certain exaggerated virtues. None appeared as blood and flesh figures negotiating the complexities of their specific historical contexts.

This universal category of "women" was inevitably charged with contradictions. The most fundamental of these was not new to the late-Qing textbooks but can be traced back to the two modes of representing women in the foundational texts on female learning. It was a tension between domestic feminine conduct as prescribed in the abstract ethical and ritual principles first put forward in the *Nüjie* and the often public and heroic conduct exemplified by women in the *Lienü zhuan*. Ban Zhao's *Nü jie* was, as noted above, based on the "Neize" which was the first text to articulate the basic dichotomies of Chinese gender ideology: the distinctions between the male (*yang* 陽) and the female (*yin* 陰) natures, and between the male outer (*wai* 外) and the female (*nei* 內)

[47] On these dualities see Prasenjit Duara, "The Regime of Authenticity: Timelessness, Gender, and National History in Modern China," *History and Theory: Studies in the Philosophy of History* 37: 3 (1998), pp. 287-308. Marilyn Booth (837-38) describes a similar strategic use of biography in Egyptian texts from the same period as invoking "a supraethnic, suprageographical, superclass community of women based on shared experience." She claims that the community of women formed through this arrangement of female biographies suppressed national boundaries and international power relationships, and encouraged the creation of a collective history of heroines. She interprets this as a "first step feminist move." This is not true of the Chinese case, first of all, because, the biographies under discussion here--unlike those Booth examined--were written by men. While, it could be argued that female-authored biographies of women were deployed to create a sense of feminine community, in the case of the late-Qing textbooks, biographies were selectively used to advance specific presriptions for female roles.

spheres of action.[48] Because this conception of female roles as fundamentally domestic was both a product of, and reinforced by, the realities of the female life cycle, late-Qing textbooks organized by life cycle roles underlined the importance of this separation of spheres.[49] Textbooks organized by ethical or biographical principles, however, highlighted the unstable correspondence between virtue and action. In these texts the steady drone of the tropes of dutiful daughters, good wives, and wise mothers was often drowned out by more compelling stories of women who avenged their fathers or struggled with their husbands in the often violent public sphere.[50]

The role of dutiful daughter was often dramatically played out at the imperial court, on the battlefield, or in the forest, far from the tranquility of the inner chambers. One of the most highly celebrated of these courageous and filial daughters was Ti Ying of the Han dynasty. Her life story first appeared in the *Lienü zhuan* and was repeated with variations in four of the nine late-Qing texts. The youngest daughter of the Qi official Duke Chunyu Yi (216 BCE) during the reign of Xiaowen (Han Wendi), Ti Ying submitted a petition when her father, who had no sons to come to his aid, was condemned to corporeal punishement. She pleaded with the emperor to reduce her father's sentence,

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[48] James Legge, trans., *Li chi: Book of Rites. Sacred Books of the East*, Chu Chai and Winberg Chai eds., 2 vols (New York: University Books, [1885] 1967), Vol. 1, pp. 478-79.

[49] Lan Dingyuan ("Nüxue zixu," 2-3) made thes point about the relationship between female life cycle roles and female education most clearly. Dai Li stated that her purpose in writing the *Nü xiaoxue*, for example, was to inform her female readers about feminine rituals in the inner chambers. She claimed she had collected and organized the scattered references to these rituals in "the Four Books, the six arts, the hundred schools, and the non-canonical thinkers" making them available to young women who did not have the ability or the time to persue these texts themselves. Dai Li, "Zishu," p. 1.

[50] Booth (856) remarks on this unstable correspondence which is highlighted by the mingling of the old and the new in female biographies published in approximately the same period in Egypt.

offering to become a palace servant in order to redeem his crime.[51] Hua Mulan 花木蘭 (circa. 500CE), the legendary warrior first celebrated in a sixth-century Chinese poem, was another quintessential heroine of this type. Because her father was ill and could not respond to the emperor's call to arms, she disguised herself and fought in his place for twelve years. Mulan's story appeared in four of the nine late Qing textbooks. The *Nüzi xin duben* alone devoted three chapters to it and included a "Mulan shi" 木蘭詩 (Poem of Mulan).[52]

Tales of other courageous and filial daughters from various periods in Chinese history abound in the new-style textbooks. Jianü 賈女 of the Warring States period and Pang E 龐娥 of the Tang dynasty (whose three brothers had died leaving her to defend the family honor) both courageously revenged their fathers' deaths.[53] Yang Xiang 楊香 and Tong Bano 童八娜 were renowned for protecting their parents from dangerous beasts (Tong died protecting her mother).[54] Miss Cao of the Han, and Miss Rao 饒娥 of the Tang both filially followed their fathers in death by drowning.[55] Xun Guan used both her literary and military talent to save her father and his people, and Gao Shushu 高妹妹 who was first featured in the *Tangshu* 唐書 (Tang history) struggled against the bandits who had killed her father.[56]

Just as the daughter's filiality found often violent expression in both the earlier instruction books for women and the late Qing textbooks, so the good wife was represented in both the earlier and later texts as one who did much

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51 On the story of Ti Ying, see Raphals, pp. 47-48.

52 Xie Chongxie, Lesson 36; Yang Qianli, Vol. 1: Lessons 8-10.

53 Yang Qianli, Vol. 1: Lesson 19; Xie Chongxie, Lesson 34; Yang Qianli, Vol. 1: Lesson 5.

54 On Yang Xiang see Yang Qianli, Xie Chongxie; on Tong Bano see Yang Qianli, Ye Zhongling.

55 Ye Zhongling, Wu Tao.

56 Yang Qianli, Ye Zhongling.

more than receive guests with modesty and serve her in-laws well. She was also a heroine who fought alongside her husband to defend the honor of family, community, or nation. Liang Furen 梁夫人, a female officer of the Southern Song, fought with her husband against the Jin invaders; Xi Furen 冼夫人 joined her husband in battle and continued to struggle after his death to defend the "Lingnan minority" in the Southern Dynasties; the wife of Li Kan 李侃 of the Tang judiciously advised her husband on military strategy; Anita Garibaldi fought with her husband in South America and Italy; and Madame Roland proved herself to be more courageous than her husband and political partner.[57]

Other women who conducted themselves courageously in the public sphere did so independently of husbands or fathers. They include Qin Liangyü; Huang Chonggu 黃崇嘏 of the kingdom of Shu (908-925) who forwarded policy proposals to the government in the guise of a man, thus earning herself an official position;[58] Joan of Arc (1412-31) who led her French countrymen into battle against the British; Charlotte Corday (1768-93) who murdered Marat in order to save the people at the time of the French Revolution; and the anarchist Louise Michel.

The extraodinariness of these women was often dependent on them either acting as stand-ins for, or actually being disguised as, men. The meaning of this gender-bending was itself ambiguous. The actions of women like Ti Ying, Hua Mulan, and Pang E in the outer sphere potentially signified defiance of the rigid prescriptons for gender roles put forward in ancient ritual texts. At the same time, however, the fact that these women only acted publicly when there were no healthy males capable of defending family or community, and that they

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57 Yang Qianli, Vol. 1: Lesson13, 16; Guang Zhanyun, Vol. 5; Yang Qianli Vol. 2: Lesson 3, 4, 10, 11.

58 Yang Qianli, Vol. 1: Lesson 25.

frequently had to remove all markers of femininity in order to do so--as was the case with Hua Mulan, Huang Chonggu, Joan of Arc, and Louise Michel (who fought against the Russians in a soldier's uniform)--implied that extradomestic female behavior was only acceptable if women acted as surrogate men.[59]

According to these examples, the representations of Chinese and foreign women functioned in similar ways in the new-style textbooks, suggesting that the mere inclusion of Western models did not provoke a radical rupture in Chinese conceptualizations of women's roles. This is not completely accurate, however. While there was a certain overlap in the ways Chinese and Western women were considered exemplary, the two spheres in which these women operated were ultimately distinct. As the examples below will indicate, this demonstrates, on the one hand, how fundamental Chinese conceptions of the feminine remained rooted in age-old understandings of life-cycle roles (the biological mother, for example). On the other, it reveals how the inclusion of Western women in these late-Qing texts expanded the meaning of the category of women to include new roles (the social mother, for example).

Only the tales of legendary and historical Chinese women were used to exemplify specific life-cycle roles. All of the dutiful daughters presented in the late-Qing textbooks were Chinese, and while some foreign women were identified as wives, their celebrated service was to their communities or nations, rather than to their husbands. Most significantly, however, none of the foreign women were included in these materials because of their exemplary role as mothers.[60]

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59 Yang Qianli, Vol. 2: Lesson 6, 7-9; Guang Zhanyun, Vol. 8.

60 Booth (875) has found examples of enlightened foreign mothers in biographies published in Egypt from around the same period, including Christiana of Spain, and the mothers of St Augustine and George Washington. I have found no such examples to date in late-Qing

In contrast to the complete absense of foreign mothers in the late-Qing textbooks, Meng Mu (Mencius's mother), the quintessential maternal exemplar, was the most celebrated presense in these texts. At least one and more frequently two or three chapters were devoted to her in seven of the nine texts. The three specific examples of her maternal rectitude and wisdom which were repeated in different permutations in the textbooks were drawn from two Han texts, the *Lienü zhuan* and the *Han shi waizhuan* 韓詩外傳 (Master Han's illustrations of the didactic applications of the *Classic of Songs*). One story was repeated in the two texts, while two were unique to each of the two texts. The first of these opened the *Lienü zhuan's* account of Meng Mu. It recounted how she moved her home three times--from the vicinity of a graveyard, to the neighborhood of a marketplace, and, finally, in close proximity to a temple--to ensure that her son was exposed to the right influences.[61] The second tale, which appeared both in the *Lienü zhuan* and the *Han shi waizhuan* described how Mencius's mother slashed the piece of cloth she had spent long hours weaving to warn the young Mencius of the damage he would do to his education if he was to suddenly discontinue his studies.[62] The third story, from the *Han shi waizhuan*, described how Mencius's mother taught her son the value of trustworthiness. Having lied by telling Mencius that a neighbor had killed his pig in order to feed him, she then went out and bought her son some

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materials which could mark an interesting particularity in the early-twentieth-century Chinese discursive production of women.

61 Albert Richard O'Hara, *The Position of Woman in Early China According to the Lieh Nü Chuan "The Biographies of Chinese Women"* (Taipei: Meiya Publications Inc., 1971), pp. 39-40.

62 O'Hara, p.40; James Robert Hightower, *Han Shih Wai Chuan: Han Ying's Illustrations of the Didactic Applications of the "Classic of Songs"* (Cambridge: Harvard -Yenching Institute Monograph Series, Vol. XI, Harvard University Press, 1952), p. 290.

meat.[63]

The representation of Meng Mu in the late Qing texbooks, like all textual appropriations within the lineage of female instruction books, reflected certain choices and was the subject of elaborations. The two stories in the *Lienü zhuan* which took place when Mencius was an adult--one describing how his mother criticized him for his treatment of his wife, another in which she expounded on the importance of the thrice following (*sancong* 三從)--do not appear in any of the late Qing texts.[64] At the same time the new textbooks tied this the most impeccable of female exemplars to new political practices. The *Zuixin funü guowen duben* elaborated on the story about the neighbor and the pig, for exmple, by claiming that Mencius's mother had sold her hairpins and ear ornaments--details which do not appear in the *Han shi waizhuan*-- in order to buy meat for her son. Depicting Meng Mu engaging in what had become an established practice of patriotic women in the early-twentieth-century--selling their personal effects in order to express their zeal for the public welfare and the nation--was a means of both making the tradition relevant and rendering new practices legitimate.[65]

The implicit assumption that foreign women could not exemplify appropriate life-cycle roles which underlay all of the early-twentieth-century textbooks, was made explicit in the two textbooks organized exclusively by stages in the female life cycle: the *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* and the *Nü xiaoxue*. Among the nine textbooks, these two texts were unique both in their organization according to the three stages in a woman's life and in their open criticicism of foreign influences. According to the first preface to the *Nü*

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63 Hightower, p. 290.

64 O'Hara, p. 41.

65 Guang Zhanyun, Vol. 6.

xiaoxue, "most of the textbooks currently popular have been influenced by [or are translations of] Japanese textbooks. These texts promote confusion by expounding on free marriage and theories of equal rights for men and women." The preface contended that differences between Chinese and foreign customs were most marked in the realm of women's education and that radical foreign ideas about female participation in the outside world were incompatible with Chinese ritual teachings.[66] The first section of the *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* also made the text's anti-foreign stance explicit. It stated that biographies of foreign women were generally excluded from the textbook in order to "preserve the national essence."[67]

The one foreign woman who did appear in this last text was Francis Willard (1839-98). She and a handful of the other foreign women featured in the various late-Qing textbooks, while not celebrated for their roles as biological mothers, were held up as exemplary "social mothers," publicly-oriented heroines whose maternal qualities were metaphorically, rather than biologically inscribed.[68] Willard was the president of the National Women's Temperance Union for almost twenty years and attempted to adopt a "do everything" social reform policy that included working with prisoners and prostitutes. While the biographical sketch of her which appeared in both the *Nüzi xin duben* and the *Zuixin funü guowen duben* was generally accurate, it did not make any mention of Willard's political involvement, specificially, her devotion to the cause of women's suffrage (she was a leading member of the American Women's Suffrage Association).[69] Other social mothers included

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66 Dai Li, p. 1.

67 Wu Tao, p. 2.

68 Booth (875), discusses what I am calling "social motherhood" in terms of the metaphorical inscription of the maternal figure.

69 On the life of Frances Willard, see James, pp. 613-19.

Harriet Beecher Stowe, and Florence Nightengale. Nightengale's "social motherhood" was explicitly noted: the narrative about her life recounted that the wounded soldiers she treated regarded her as a "loving mother" (*cimu* 慈母).[70]

In the late-Qing textbooks, the image of the model mother was not only expanded to include the concept of social motherhood, but to encompass the new category of national motherhood, *guomin zhi mu* 國民之母 (mothers of citizens). In defining the relationship between women and the nation in terms of motherhood these texts simultaneously naturalized the woman's new political role and politicized her natural maternal role. Integrating national concerns into the female life cycle, they gave the most intimate of human relationships--that of mother to child--a political meaning.[71] This understanding of the woman's private roles having public ramifications was rife with ambiguities concerning the relationship between the feminine inner and political outer realms. This

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[70] Yang Qianli, Lessons 17, 19. Egyptian biographies of Florence Nightingale from precisely this period (1909) also describe her as caring for soldiers in the Crimea "just like a mother," Booth, p. 875. This raises the intriguing question of whether there was a stock pool of Western female biographies that circulated in the non-Western world in the early-twentieth-century.

[71] This emphasis on the public ramifications of women's private roles in the Chinese concept of mothers of citizens was also central to the post-revolutionary French and American idea of Republican Motherhood. Both the Chinese and Western formulations served as devices which integrated domesticity and politics--the spheres of *nei* 內 and *wai* 外 in the Chinese worldview--and inserted women into historical time and political theory. This linking of motherhood and citizenship was nonetheless rife with paradoxes and multiple meanings. It marked new possibilities for women as national actors, while foreclosing the option of full female political participation. On the meaning of Republican Motherhood in the US, see Linda Kerber, *Toward an Intellectual History of Women: Essays by Linda Kerber* (Chapel Hill and London: The University of North Carolina Press, 1997), pp. 41-64, 94; in France, see Joan B. Landes, *Women and the Public Sphere in the Age of the French Revolution* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1988), pp. 129-138.

ambivalence was not new to the early twentieth-century, however. A number of the earlier didactic texts for women, particularly those preceding the Ming-Qing period, drew direct links between female activities in the inner sphere and the outer realm. Most significantly, in the *Lienü zhuan* exemplary women were depicted as sage counselors who advised their hierarchical superiors on matters of state, office, and personal morality. They included counterparts to ministers, advisors to their husbands, and prescient individuals who attempted to save their states, families, or selves from disaster.[72] The *Nü xiaojing* had also emphasized the impact women had not only on their extended families but on society and the cosmos.[73]

Whereas in the past, these links between women and the outer realm had been informal, ad hoc, and often contested, reformist educators in the late Qing attempted to formalize this connection through the institutionalization of a new kind of female literacy. The introduction to the *Nüzi xin duben* set up an opposition between two kinds of education or spheres of knowledge: the education of the citizen which it associated with women and the learning of the literati which it identified with men. Women, having received little formal education, were described as blank intellectual slates upon which the rich colors of the new citizen's education could be directly applied, unsullied by moribund assumptions or predispositions. "If we do not use [the methods of] citizens' education to educate women," the introduction stated, "then it would be as if we had not educated them at all."[74]

One of the aims of this new citizens' education was to include women in the "community of consciousness" that would serve as the cement of the new

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72 Raphals, p. 28.

73 Murray, p. 30.

74 Yang Qianli, "Daoyan," pp. 2-3.

Chinese nation and the basis for unified action. The *Zuixin funü guowen duben*, for example, introduced its readers to the new constitutional idiom and the new discouse on nationalism. It devoted sections to detailed explanations of the meaning of the terms "nation" and "society" (Vol. 4); explained differences between political systems including forms of constitutional polities; and expounded on the role of an assembly (Vol. 6); the need for laws (Vol. 8), taxes (Vol. 4), and military service (Vol. 7). Terms relevant to new understandings of society were also explained and the importance of public virtue stressed.[75] These texts also included discussions of history, geography, and topical political issues. The *Zuixin funü guowen duben* presented a series of detailed lessons on consecutive periods of Chinese history, from the ancient through the modern eras. The more recent accounts included critical discussions of such sensitive issues as the 1894-95 Sino-Japanese War, the 1898 reforms, and the Boxer Rebellion. The *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* and the *Nüzi guowen duben* also situated China in the global context. In a lesson which was accompanied by a map of the world, the former text explained that, while the "Chinese often call China all under heaven," it was "only one country in East Asia."[76] The *Zuixin funü guowen duben* also gave a series of lessons on world geography, and, in the guise of the account of a traveller in China, a description of the various regions of the country, from the coast to the hinterland (for example, Vol. 5).

Despite this commitment to giving girls and women a new kind of education which would better equip them to operate in the civic realm, the textbooks remained ambiguous on the subject of political participation. The only Chinese women noted for playing a direct role in politics were Huang

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[75] Guang Zhanyun, Vol. 10, 7; Xie Chongxie; Lesson 37.

[76] Xie Chongxie, Lesson 49; see also Liu Sheng, Lesson 17.

Chonggu, who had to disguise hereself as a man to do so, and Wu Zetian 武則天 (625-705) who was presented as a licentious usurper.[77] At the same time, however, foreign women--Charlotte Corday, Madame Roland, Louise Michel, and Anita Garibaldi--were heralded for their bold political interventions, indicating how the inclusion of foreign women in these texts expanded the imagined possibilities for their female readers.

In an important departure from the earlier instruction books for women which tended to rest exclusively on the level of abstract heroism, a number of the new-style textbooks attempted to link women directly to their immediate historical contexts by appealing to them to participate in specific regional and national political struggles. This appeal was often framed by accounts of the actions of foreign exemplars. The *Nüzi xin duben*, for example, appended its call to patriotic action to an account of the life of Florence Nightengale. The final lines of the biography and, rather dramatically, of the reader itself were as follows: "Alas, Florence died some five years ago. The people of Western Europe have been enriched by her kindness and Japanese women are continuing her work [in Asia]. At this time, mighty and crafty Russia is again extending its claws into the east, ensuring that the north of China will be a bloody battlefield in the future. The women of China have risen up on hearing the news and embrace Florence's ambition." The author thus encouraged his female readers to join their sisters --in China, students at the the Aiguo Nüexiao, and, in Japan, members of the Gongaihui 女學生共愛會 (Humanitarian association)--who had organized to protest the amassing of Russian troops in Manchuria after the Boxer Rebellion.[78]

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77 Yang Qianli, Vol. 1. Lesson 25; Lessons 22, 23.

78 On the resistance of students from the Patriotic Women's School, see *Subao* 蘇報 [Jiangsu journal], 1903.5.8; on the overseas student organization see Abe Hiroshi 阿部洋, *Chûkoku*

New nationalist concerns combined with scientific reasoning also drove the late Qing textbooks' discourse on religion and "superstition." These texts dissuaded young women from continuing to worship goddesses of salvation or legendary heroines, deriding female religious and folk practices and beliefs by exposing their irrationality. One textbook claimed that the mercy of the bodhisattva Guanyin was not to be found in the temple but in the schoolroom. While one would not necessarily become a Buddha by following the practices of Buddhism and Daoism, one would certainly become a useful person by practicing discipline at school.[79] The introduction to the songbook explained that three songs were explicitly devoted to "destroying supertition." The first of these was "Nüjie zhong" 女界鐘 (A toscin for women) which used science to puncture young women's belief in a number of legendary female figures: Nüwa Shi 女媧氏, one of the alleged ancestors of humanity; Chang E 嫦娥, a mythical figure who ascended the moon after secretly eating her husband's immortality pill; Xiwang Mu 西王母, the grand old lady of the west; and Xiangjun 湘君, the diety of the Xiang river in Hunan. The second song, "Saoqing Niang" 掃晴孃 (Girls who sweep away the rain), explained the futility of the custom of cutting the form of a woman holding a broom out of paper after a long rain in order to ensure that the weather would clear. Finally, "Qixi zhimi" 七夕指迷 (Guidance out of the maze concerning the [Double Seven Festival]) attempted to deconstruct the romantic figure of the young female weaver, claiming that the much-loved tale of the cowherd and the weaver was based on the preposterous illusion that the weaving maid could cross a bridge of magpies to meet her lover.[80]

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no kindaikyôiku to Meiji Nihon 中國の近代教育と明治日本 [Modern Chinese Education and Meiji Japan] (Tokyo: Fukumura shuppan kabushiki gaisha, 1990), p. 102.

79 Liu Sheng, Lessons 63-64, pp. 17-18.

80 Ye Zhongling, pp. 1, 12-14, 28, 51.

The concerns of the publishers of new women's textbooks to suppress superstition forced them to take liberties in their narrativization of the lives of foreign exemplars. According to the account of Joan of Arc's life, for example, Joan was first and foremost a patriot. Her assertion that she had been guided in her mission against the English by divine "voices" was dismissed as a clever ploy. She had only spoken of divine inspiration to encourage the ignorant, lowly, and superstitious common people to support the French cause. Joan herself, the narrative asserted, had no real religious commitment. In the end, however, she gave in to her captors and pretended to hear voices. This was the end of her.[81]

Conclusion

In this paper I have made a very preliminary exploration of the discursive production of women in late-Qing China by examining the uses of female exemplars in textbooks for girls and women. My objective has been to avoid the often misleading and overdetermined divide between "tradition" and "modernity" by examining the late-Qing texts in their historical context. This method has revealed the way biographies of Chinese historical exemplars were transformed as they were integrated into later texts and socio-historical contexts, both reflecting and contributing to the gradual sedimentation of meaning over time. The story of Ti Ying, for example, was radically transformed through countless refigurations of the *Lienü zhuan* and in tandem with growing anxieties concerning the woman's place in society. Featured in the original Han text for her rhetorical skill in representing her father's case to

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[81] Yang Qianli, Vol. 2, Lessons 7-9; Guang Zhanyun, Vol. 10.

the emperor, she became a paragon, not of eloquence, but of filiality by the early-twentieth century. This examination of the longue durée of female biographies also helps map the shifting locus of authority in a vast historical tradition. While certain of the late-Qing texts explicitly aligned themselves with Ban Zhao's *Nüjie*, others appealed to later models, following, for example, the Ming-Qing practice of classifying their biographical narratives according to stages in the female life-cycle. One of the many unresolved questions in this paper is what this invocation of specific sites of authority in particular texts reveals about deeper cleavages in the late-Qing cultural and political field.

An important innovation in the late-Qing textbooks was the inclusion of the modern West as a new site of authority. The extension of the repertoire of exemplary Chinese female biographies to include Western models was both a product of the foreign challenge to China's national and cultural integrity in the mid- to late-nineteenth century, and a response to it. The introduction of the life stories of foreign women made new feminine roles thinkable at a time when concerns for China's national survival required the mobilization of all Chinese, male and female, in the national interest. These Western models legitimized new kinds of feminine behavior, sanctioning female public service and extending the sphere of political participation from the heroic acts of extraordinary women to the involvement of ordinary women in local and regional struggles.

While these representations of foreign women challenged certain long-standing feminine norms, they were simultaneoulsy constrained by fundamental principles of Chinese gender and literacy ideology. These principles were not revealed in the stated objectives and self-consciously new rhetoric of the texts which introduced the Western exemplars, but rather in the ways the biographical narratives were structured, the unstated assummptions which

informed them, and the pedagogical methods used to present them. One of the most significant of these principles was the understanding of female learning as *jiao* rather than *xue* or *cai*. The new-style textbooks emphasized the moralistic and practical principles of female literacy articulated in earlier materials by using only female authors of didactic texts as literary models and by presenting "women of talent" from China's past as negative exemplars. The biographies of foreign women were often distorted to reflect this bias against women writers. Just as Ban Zhao was rarely celebrated for her contribution to the Han History, Harriet Beecher Stowe's literary achievements were consistantly elided.

Another foundational principle of Chinese gender ideology which marked representations of both Chinese and Western women in these texts was the dichotomy betweeen *nei* and *wai*. First articulated in the "Neize" section of the *Liji*, this dichotomy was problematic from the Han dynasty when Ban Zhao used it as the basis of her gender ideology in the *Nüjie*. Many commentators on Chinese women's history have noted how Ban Zhao's own life, her classical training and contribution as a court historian--details which were often omitted in later texts--defied the rigid division of spheres which her own guidebook for women advocated. And, as the examination of the late- Qing textbooks has shown, the precepts for domestic life first put forward in the *Nüjie* were not easily reconciled with the extradomestic exploits of the *Lienü zhuan* heroines to say nothing of the political interventions of Western women. The early-twentieth-century texts highlighted rather than transcended this age-old tension between the inner and outer spheres. The only ambiguous resolution they put forward was not a new one--private female roles would have public ramifications--an idea dating back to the *Lienü zhuan* but now recast in the nationalist idiom of "mothers of citizens."

Of the remaining unresolved questions raised in this paper, the most

significant, perhaps, relate to reception. How were these biographies read by young women in early-twentieth-century China? To what extent did representations of Western Women Worthies contribute to the constitution of individual Chinese female subjectivities in this period? Did readers accept the biographical narratives as presented, challenge them with counternarratives, or reappropriate them to reflect their own anxieties and aspirations? While offering few clues to how their message was received, the late-Qing textbooks do provide abundant evidence of the vast array of images of feminine selfhood available to young Chinese women in this period--from Mencius's mother, to Mulan the warrior and Marat's murderer. In spite of efforts on the part of textbook editors to discipline these life stories in conformity with their own social and cultural priorities, this multiplicity of potential models itself marked the late Qing as a moment of--often tragically unrealized--historical possibilities.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR LATE-QING TEXTBOOKS

1. *XDB*

Yang Qianli 楊千里, ed.. *Nüzi xin duben* 女子新讀本 [New reader for girls and women], Shanghai (Beijing, Hankou, Nanjing): Wenming shuju, 1950 (1904).

2. *GWDB*

Liu Sheng 劉生. *Nüzi guowen duben* 女子國文讀本 [Chinese reader for girls and women], Shanghai: Commercial Publishing, 1905.

3. *XS*

Xie Chongxie 謝充燮. *Chudeng xiaoxue nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 初等小學女子修身教科書 [Lower-level elementary female ethics textbook], Shanghai: Zhongguo jiaoyu gailiang hui, (Wenming shuju, Kaiming shuju, Xinxue huishe, Shizhong shuju, Kexue huishe, Guan shuju in all provinces), 1906.

4. *ZXXS*

Xu Jiaxing 許家惺. *Zuixin nüzi xiushen jiaokeshu* 最新女子修身教科書 [Newest ethical textbook for girls and women], Shanghai: Qunxue she 群學社 (1906, March, August).

5. *SFXS*

Wu Tao 吳濤 ed.. *Nüzi shifan xiushen xue* 女子師範修身學 [Ethics for female normal students], Beijing: Beijing diyi shuju, 1907.

6. *FN*

Guang Zhanyun 廣展雲, Guang Yiyun 廣翼雲, Chen Yuxin 陳與新 comp.. *Zuixin funü guowen duben* 最新婦女國文讀本 [Newest Chinese reader for women], 8 vols. Fouzhou: Jiaoyu puji she, 1908.

7. *NXX*

Dai Li 戴禮. *Nü xiaoxue* 女小學 [Women's elementary education], Beijing: Beijing hufangqiao jinghua yinshuju, 1908 (1905).

8. *CDFB*

Biaomeng bianyisuo 彪蒙編譯所 [Enlightenment bureau for compilation and translation], *Nüzi fenlei chidu fanben* 女子分類尺牘範本 [Copybook of classified letters for girls and women], Shanghai: Biaomeng shushi, 1908.

9.*CG*
Ye Zhongling 葉中泠 ed.. Jiang Weiqiao 蔣維喬 collator. *Nüzi xin changge chuji* 女子新唱歌初集 [First collection of new songs for girls], Shanghai: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1914.